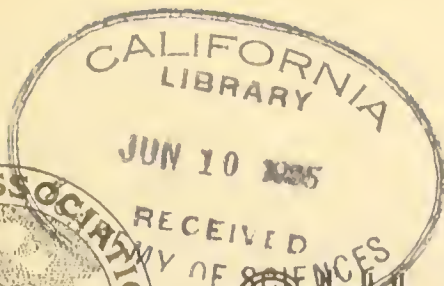
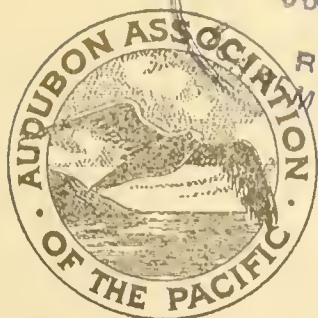


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# THE

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# GULL

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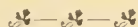
NUMBER 6

## Pileated Woodpecker

I had just forty-two hours to spend in the Giant Forest, Sequoia National Park, California. It was not a question of "When do we eat?" or "Where do we sleep?" but "Where is the Pileated Woodpecker?" Up at daylight, I was rewarded early on the second morning by hearing the loud hammering and the ringing call of the Pileated Woodpecker. A quick tramp among the great redwoods, across patches of snow, and there he was away up in a big dead fir! There he not only hammered for me, but hitched his way up to the top of the tree and gave his characteristic call. And to show what a beautiful bird he really was, he flew directly overhead. I doubt if my first view of the California Condor will give me such a thrill.

In contrast to this giant which seems so fitting an inhabitant of this wonderful forest, a Chickadee with the amusing name of *Penthestes gambeli abbreviatus*, the Short-tailed Chickadee, flew above me. Between the two extremes of size were several smaller Woodpeckers, also Sapsuckers, Canyon Wrens, Fox Sparrows, Evening Grosbeaks and Cassin Finches. Anyone, seeking the bird-lovers' paradise, should try the Giant Forest.

C. R. Thomas, Berkeley, California. April 22, 1935.



## Vignettes of Birds Long Since Flown

A dim picture of a very small child living on the beautiful prairies of Texas surrounded by all kinds of delightful creatures, herself almost one of them, for the colts could be ridden, the calves chased, the dogs were daily playmates, but the birds—so fascinating, so brightly colored, but alas, so elusive!

Greatly desired were they, to hold, to pet, to play with, but never could they be brought close enough for eager hands to stroke. Wise elders were consulted, hopefully a handful of salt was obtained, and the child sallied forth, her problem solved. Birds were many, hopping around on the ground, and great efforts were made to throw even a grain of salt upon their most evasive tails, but the more earnestly they were chased the faster they flew away, until the child returned in tears to report the failure of her efforts.

A year or two passed, and the child, now full five, evolved a wonderful plan which was communicated to no one. Chickens visibly roosted on the limbs of trees. It was said that birds slept in the branches of trees also; therefore if one should go to the trees at night perhaps one could catch and possess, as one's own, the feathered treasures. Dusk came and a start was made. The prairies looked very wide and eerie in the failing light, and Belle, the setter, who would not tell on one, was taken for company, tightly clutched by the collar. The first grove of mesquite trees seemed very far away and there were holes in the prairie into which a small person might fall; also one had heard of wolves and bears, but at last the mesquite trees were reached. Darkness had fallen, so the birds would surely be drowsing and if one ran one's hand along the branches one could catch the sleeping birds and carry them home safe cupped in little hands.

Unhappily mesquite trees are very thorny and instead of nestling birds, rough bark and scratching thorns were encountered in the search, stubbornly persisted in, until at last failure was evident and the long way back had to be faced. Stumbling along with Belle for a guide, the child reached home, where she had been missed, and mother gently explained that birds could not be caught in just that way.

The next picture was some three years later in the beautiful southern spring-time. The mesquite trees were arrayed in their lacy foliage of tender green; the wide prairies were a mass of color as far as the eye could see, with acres of yellow and red and of Blue Bonnets and pink Sensitive Plants whose leaves furled up if one touched them. The air was alive with singing, fluttering birds. A collection of birds' eggs was now the absorbing interest of the eight-year-old bird enthusiast, but there were certain rules to be carefully observed. If there was but one egg in a nest it must never be taken, and never more than two eggs should be obtained from one nest.

The eggs of the ground-nesting birds were easy to get if one could locate the nest; the frail little platform of the doves was low in the mesquites and one of the two white eggs was easy to reach, while the deeper cups of the mocking birds made of rough little sticks ranged higher. The white eggs of the woodpecker in a telegraph post could still be secured by "shinnying" up the pole, but one little yellow-breasted bird (was it a warbler?) baffled the small collector. It built its swinging cradle on the slender branchlets at the ends of boughs too weak to bear even a child's weight and too high to be reached from the ground. Naturally these eggs were greatly desired for the collection, but the problem of getting them was a difficult one to solve. Scouting had located a nest on the upmost branchlets of a large tree and one day dear old Charlie, the big bay horse, was ridden to the pasture directly beneath the nest, but it was still above reach. So the child stood up on Charlie's broad but slippery back, the branch was pulled down and from that precarious position the nest-robber gloated over the five dainty little spotted mauve eggs. The permitted two were taken, but although Charlie stood like a statue, getting down to a seat on his back without breaking the speckled treasures was a ticklish undertaking. It was finally accomplished without an accident and the child triumphant rode Charlie home.

In the spring of the following year a mockingbird's nest was discovered and the entranced child watched the young bird's rapidly growing ragged pin feathers and gaping yellow-lined mouths into which the parents were continually popping green caterpillars and other delectable morsels. When the birdlets were nearly ready to fly, the child (abetted by an older person) stole, not eggs this time, but the baby birds. They were put in a cage, fed and hung in the sunshine, where the parent birds hearing their cries came to feed the disconsolate fledglings and fluttered about the confining cage. It seemed very pitiful to the child and there was no happiness in her heart even though at last she possessed her captive birds. The incident made such a deep impression that never since that day has she desired birds other than unconfined and in their natural surroundings.

The child, now turned ten, was thereupon taken away from the wide, free prairies and from her feathered and furred companions to a far-away city where no birds or pets were hers, but in their stead paved city streets, schools and books were her portion, and not until many years had passed did she have the chance to play again with her beloved birds.

Mrs. Ynes Mexia, Quito, Ecuador.



May Field Trip was taken on Sunday, the 12th, to the Saint Mary's region in Contra Costa County, with twenty-four members and twenty guests. The day was ideal in every respect. The usual route was followed along the highway past the rows of eucalypti and oaks, down along a private road which follows the creek. Then returning to the highway, we passed the reservoir to the picnic grounds, where luncheon was eaten. After luncheon the group continued up the canyon as far as the first ranch.

Opportunity for observing so many species of birds and hearing their songs and call notes with a minimum amount of physical effort, makes this the outstanding trip of the year. The expression, "something doing every minute," may well be applied here. The songs of the House Wren, Vigors Wren, Warbling Vireo, Pileolated Warbler, Black-headed Grosbeak and Lazuli Bunting predominated.

Occupied nests of the following species were found: Red-shafted Flicker, Western Flycatcher, Wood Pewee, Violet-green Swallow, California Jay, House Wren, Western Bluebird, Cassin Vireo, Bullock Oriole, Brewer Blackbird and House Finch. Cliff Swallows were still present in fair numbers, skimming over the surface of the reservoir, but no evidence of nesting sites in the region visited was noted.

A Great Horned Owl, perched on a low limb of a live oak, in full sunlight, furnished the thrill of the day.

Some of the members chose to climb to the top of Las Trampas Ridge and were rewarded with the observation of Thrashers, Western Gnatcatchers, a Townsend Warbler and Bell Sparrows. Nests of Thrashers and Bell Sparrows were found containing eggs.

A total of sixty-nine species was noted as follows:

Great Blue Heron	Horned Lark	Lutescent Warbler
Turkey Vulture	Violet-green Swallow	Yellow Warbler
Red-tailed Hawk	Tree Swallow	Townsend Warbler
Sparrow Hawk	Rough-winged Swallow	Macgillivray Warbler
California Quail	Barn Swallow	Pileolated Warbler
Ring-necked Pheasant	Cliff Swallow	English Sparrow
Killdeer	Coast Jay	Meadowlark
Band-tailed Pigeon	California Jay	Red-winged Blackbird
Mourning Dove	Plain Titmouse	Bullock Oriole
Horned Owl	Bush-tit	Brewer Blackbird
White-throated Swift	Slender-billed Nuthatch	Black-headed Grosbeak
Anna Hummingbird	Wren-tit	Lazuli Bunting
Allen Hummingbird	House Wren	Purple Finch
Red-shafted Flicker	Vigors Wren	House Finch
California Woodpecker	California Thrasher	Willow Goldfinch
Hairy Woodpecker	Robin	Green-backed Goldfinch
Willow Woodpecker	Russet-backed Thrush	Lawrence Goldfinch
Nuttall Woodpecker	Western Bluebird	Spotted Towhee
Ash-throated Flycatcher	Western Gnatcatcher	Brown Towhee
Black Phoebe	Shrike	Bell Sparrow
Western Flycatcher	Hutton Vireo	Junco
Wood Pewee	Cassin Vireo	Chipping Sparrow
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Warbling Vireo	Song Sparrow

Members attending: Messrs. and Mesdames Dunshee, Myer, Stephens; Mesdames Kelly, Ruby H. Thomas; Misses Danz, Dunshee, Papina, Werner; Messrs. Bolander, Bremer, Bryant, Bunker, Davis, Power, Taylor, C. R. Thomas; Masters Kirker, Lehman, Lippmann, McClintock. Among the guests were: Mr. and Mrs. Haynes; Mesdames Anabel, Bunker, Davis, Price, Rocca; Mrs. Munson Deuprey, Second Vice-President of the Los Angeles Audubon Society; Messrs. Fitter, Jencks, Price.

Chas. A. Bryant, Leader and Historian.



## Audubon Notes

**June Meeting:** The regular meeting will be held on Thursday, the 13th, at 8 p. m., room 19, Ferry Building.

The speaker of the evening will be our junior member, Eddie McClintock, whose subject will be "Birds of the South Pacific."



**June Field Trip** will be taken to Ross, Marin County, on Sunday, the 16th, visiting Phoenix, Lagunitas and Alpine Lakes, returning to the picnic place below Phoenix Lake for supper. Those so desiring may start from Fairfax. Purchase round-trip ticket to Ross or Fairfax, 60c. Take Sausalito Ferry at 8:45 a. m. Those desiring to remain for supper bring food for two meals. Leader, Chas. A. Bryant.



**May Meeting:** The 214th regular meeting was held on May 9th, room 19, Ferry Building, with forty-five members and guests present. President Junea W. Kelly presiding.

The following observations were reported:

Mrs. Kelly: April 15th, Stanford campus, Olive-sided Flycatcher; 19th, Bay Farm Island, Alameda, 18 Knots; 29th, Glaucous Gull, 2 Ruddy Turnstones, 1 Black Turnstone; May 4th, Claremont, Townsend Warbler singing; April 27th, Phoenix Lake, Black-throated Gray Warbler singing.

Fritz Lippman: April 19th, San Francisco beach, 12 Hudsonian Curlew, 12 Black-bellied Plovers, 25 Snowy Plovers, Semipalmated Plover, Least Sandpiper, 400± Sanderlings, 10 Red-backed Sandpipers.

Commander Parmenter: April 25th, San Mateo Bridge, 200± Northern Phalarope; 19th, Knots 300±; May 8th,

Bodega Bay, 200± Black Brant.

Mrs. Stephens: April 20th, San Mateo Bridge, 200+ Knots; 26th, Anna Hummingbird's nest in Golden Gate Park, Olive-sided Flycatcher; 28th, Bodega Bay, 2000+ Black Brant; May 4th, Golden Gate Park, Townsend Warbler.

Dr. Gayle Pickwell of the San Jose State Teachers' College spoke on "Birds of the Transition and Canadian Life Zones of the Sierra Nevada and Sierra Madre Mountains."

Big Bear Lake at an elevation of 6700 feet presented some interesting contrasts in bird habitats. In years of abundant rains the playa of the lake is covered with water; in other years it is almost barren, with a surface of dry scum. On the lake an Eared Grebe occupied its floating nest of pondweed. Not a hundred feet away were nests of the Horned Lark, a bird which inhabits the marginal rocky and almost grassless lands. Then a little farther in the grassy fields were Meadowlarks. Cliff Swallows were here, but there were no cliffs although plenty of mud and an abundant supply of insects. Where did the swallows build their nests? On the trunks of the trees beneath the projecting limbs 40 to 75 feet above the ground!

At Fallen Leaf Lake in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, Robins, Tanagers and Grosbeaks sang incessantly, and also many Warblers, whose songs sounded so much alike. A Pileolated Warbler on her nest refused to leave while thirty persons made a very close inspection. Dr. Pickwell speculated as to whether it was fear or an irresistible urge to incubate that caused her to tolerate such intrusion.

## Audubon Association of the Pacific

Organized January 25, 1917

### For the Study and the Protection of Birds

President.....	Mrs. G. Earle Kelly.....	1311 Grand Ave., Alameda, Calif.
Corresponding Secretary.....	C. B. Lastreto.....	260 California St., San Francisco
Treasurer.....	Mrs. A. B. Stephens.....	1695 Filbert St., San Francisco

Monthly meeting second Thursday, 8 P. M., Room 19, Ferry Building.

Address Bulletin correspondence to Mrs. A. B. Stephens, Editor, 1695 Filbert St., San Francisco.

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Life memberships, \$50.00.

Members are responsible for dues until written notice of resignation is received by Treasurer.